

Questions and Answers

Jack O'Connell Beginning-Teacher
Salary Incentive Program, Fiscal Year 1999-00

Use of Program Funding

- Q1:** Can my district participate in the program if the lowest salary for a qualified teacher is already at or above \$32,000
- A1:** Yes. The district will be required to raise the salaries of qualified teachers to a salary that exceeds \$32,000. The lowest salary will be established at the level at which the increase completely expends the incentive funds. Incentive funds will be used to increase the salary of all qualified teachers in any salary cell (including cells not normally associated with beginning teachers) to the new minimum. Please see the attached glossary for the definition of a qualified teacher.
- Q2:** May incentive funds be utilized to increase the salaries of qualified teachers who are not "beginning-teachers?" In other words, if a district increases its beginning teacher salaries to \$32,000 or above, may the cells of the salary schedule that are used to pay qualified teachers that are not on the beginning step also be increased to the new minimum? May, as an example, steps 2 or 3 in column one or steps 1 and 2 in column two also be increased to the new minimum with the revenues from this program
- A2:** Yes. The district will establish a new minimum salary for qualified teachers at a salary level that exhausts the incentive funds. The salary of any qualified teacher at a lower salary level may then be increased to the new minimum using incentive funds. Salary, not experience, determines the beneficiaries.
- Q3:** The implementation of this program has resulted in multiple steps at the same salary level on my schedule. Can my district use incentive funds to provide a differential between these steps
- A3:** No. Once the new lowest salary has been established the district may increase salaries for qualified teachers to that level but no higher using incentive funds. Differentials must be funded from district sources. This applies even to the differentials that must be applied to insure that your schedule has only one lowest salary cell.

- Q4:** To qualify for incentive funding, must the salary adjustment be paid retroactive to the beginning of the school year or will a mid-year salary adjustment qualify for the incentive funding?
- A4:** To qualify for the incentive funding the district must incur actual costs for the 1999-00 fiscal year that fully exhaust the incentive funding received. Local discretion may be used to determine whether the salary increases occur mid-year or are paid retroactively. Please keep in mind, however, that the incentive funds used to support a mid-year implementation in 1999-00 will determine the level of support for full-year salaries in future years.
- Q5:** If my district submits an application indicating that it is participating in the Jack O'Connell Beginning-Teacher Salary Incentive Program and subsequently decides not to participate, what will happen
- A5:** Once an application certifying participation in the program has been received, the California Department of Education (CDE) will initiate payment of program funds to the district. It will be the district's obligation to notify the CDE if the planned participation does not occur. Depending on circumstances, the CDE will then either reduce a subsequent state school fund warrant or will bill the district for the program funds.
- Q6:** Can you provide an example of a typical salary schedule, before and after the implementation of the salary incentive program
- A6:** Yes, please refer to the item just below this Q & A on our Web page. Sample salary schedules are included under [Sample Salary Schedule, Before and After Implementation of the Jack O'Connell Beginning-Teacher Salary Incentive Program](#).
- Q7:** The CDE's program information letter indicates a district must apply for the beginning salary appropriation by May 8, 2000 in order to receive the funds in the current fiscal year. If the district is unable to reach agreement with the bargaining unit regarding salaries for 1999-00 until after May 8, 2000, may the district still apply for beginning teacher salary incentive funds
- A7:** Yes, the statutory provisions of this legislation do not have a cutoff for the CDE apportionment; therefore, program applications will be accepted after May 8, 2000. Please understand, however, that only qualified expenditures actually made prior to July 1, 2000 are guaranteed to receive incentive funding. Reimbursement of retroactive expenditures occurring after June 30, 2000 can not be guaranteed. Reimbursement of expenditures made after June 30, 2000 that are retroactive to

the prior year will be made only if any remaining 1999-00 program balance is legislatively reauthorized and reappropriated to the fiscal year of the expenditure.

Revenue limit

- Q1:** In subsequent fiscal years, will the incentive funds added to my revenue limit receive growth and cost-of-living adjustments (COLA)
- A1:** Not under current law. *Education Code* Section 45023.4 (d) would need to be amended to provide a COLA adjustment and to make the revenue limit “add-on” a revenue limit adjustment per unit of average daily attendance (ADA) that allows for growth in ADA.

Accounting for the Incentive Funds

- Q1:** How will I account for these incentive funds
- A1:** For standardized account code structure (SACS) coding, use Resource Code 0000, Unrestricted, and Revenue Object Code 8590, All Other State Revenues. For non-SACS coding, use Income Account 8590, All Other State Revenues.

Credentials

- Q1:** My district has an employee teaching in the special education program under a waiver. The employee also holds a valid teaching credential. Does the cost of increasing this teacher’s salary to the new minimum qualify for incentive funds
- A1:** Yes. As long as the teacher holds a valid teaching credential, a baccalaureate degree, and is funded from the district’s general fund, the salary adjustment qualifies for incentive funding.
- Q2:** My district has a counselor who, in addition to his pupil services credential, also holds a valid teaching credential. Does the cost of increasing the counselor’s salary to the new minimum qualify for incentive funds
- A2:** No. The program incentive funds can only be used to augment salaries of qualified teachers.
- Q3:** Does a preliminary teaching credential qualify as a valid teaching credential for purposes of this incentive program

- A3:** Yes. Teachers with preliminary teaching credentials may be distinguished from teachers with emergency permits, intern permits, or waivers which are not qualified for participation.

Charter Schools

- Q1:** May a charter school apply for beginning-teacher salary incentive funding
- A1:** Charter schools receiving the charter school categorical block grant may not receive funding through the Jack O'Connell Beginning-Teacher Salary Incentive Program. Those charter schools which are not participating in the new charter funding model and not receiving the charter school categorical block grant may receive beginning-teacher salary incentive funding through their sponsoring local educational agency (LEA).

Glossary

Qualified Teacher: A teacher meeting the following requirements: holds a valid teaching credential, not including an emergency permit, or waiver; possesses a baccalaureate or higher degree; and, receives a salary paid from the general fund of the district or county office.

Salary Differential: The increase in salary between one step on the schedule and the next higher step in that column.

Salary Cell: A point on the salary schedule at which a teacher may be placed for salary determination.

Salary Step: See salary cell.

Lowest salary for purposes of the Jack O'Connell Beginning Teacher Salary Incentive Program: The minimum salary that may be paid to a qualified teacher in a school district participating in the incentive program, and that is set at the salary level which fully expends the incentive funding.